



City of New Bedford  
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## P R E S S   R E L E A S E

### **Mosquito Ground-Spraying Planned for Tonight**

**New Bedford, Massachusetts-** The New Bedford Health Department has announced that a ground-spraying program for mosquitoes will be conducted tonight at approximately 8:30 p.m. to 11:30 p.m. The area to be sprayed is East of Route 140, South of Route 195, West of Shawmut Avenue, North of Route 6 and Buttonwood Park /Zoo. Bristol County Mosquito Control Project has documented an increase in mosquito activity in these areas of the city. This preventive intervention is similar to the ground-spraying effort that took place on August 2nd and 3<sup>rd</sup>, which was highly effective in reducing the mosquito population.

Marianne De Souza, Health Director advises people with asthma or other respiratory conditions to stay indoors to reduce the possibility of aggravating these conditions during ground spraying. In addition, they may wish to keep windows closed, turn window fans and air conditioners off or put on re-circulate. Anvil, a pesticide product will be applied from truck mounted sprayers as a fine mist which will be deposited on outdoor surfaces but degrades very quickly within 15 to 20 minutes, particularly when exposed to sunlight. Adulticiding for WNV is generally performed late at night to target the particular species of mosquitoes that carry the virus. In situations of high risk of an outbreak of human disease, the use of adulticide spraying is recommended to reduce mosquito numbers in those areas.

Appropriate precautions to reduce exposure to insecticide during spraying include:

- People with asthma or other respiratory conditions may wish to stay indoors to reduce possibility of aggravating these conditions.
- In the immediate spray zone, keep windows closed and air conditioners and fans off.

- Rinse any homegrown fruits or vegetables with water as is typically done before eating.
- Keep pets indoors during spraying to minimize their risk of exposure.

The effect of tonight's targeted spraying will be available next Thursday, when the Bristol County Mosquito Control Project reports their post-spraying mosquito trap collection numbers. Results from this week's collections regarding West Nile Virus and Eastern Equine Encephalitis are still pending and will be released by the State Laboratory early next week. So far, there have been no positive WNV or EEE collections in New Bedford.

In 2006, there were three human cases of WNV in Massachusetts with no fatalities. While West Nile Virus can infect people of all ages, people over the age of 50 are at higher risk for severe disease. West Nile Virus is usually transmitted to humans through the bite of an infected mosquito.

Appropriate precautions to avoid exposure to mosquito bites include:

- **Be Aware of Peak Mosquito Hours** – The hours from dusk to dawn are peak biting times for many mosquitoes. Reduce outdoor activities that occur during evening or early morning. Otherwise, take extra care to use repellent and protective clothing.
- **Clothing Can Help** reduce mosquito bites. Although it may be difficult to do when it's hot, wearing long-sleeves, long pants and socks when outdoors will help keep mosquitoes away from your skin.
- **Apply Insect Repellent** when you go outdoors. Use a repellent with DEET (N, N-diethyl-m-toluamide), permethrin, picaridin (KBR 3023), or oil of lemon eucalyptus [p-methane 3, 8-diol (PMD)] according to the instructions on the product label. DEET products should not be used on infants under two months of age and should be used in concentrations of 30% or less on older children. Oil of lemon eucalyptus should not be used on children under three years of age.
- **Drain Standing Water** – Mosquitoes lay their eggs in standing water. Limit the number of places around your home for mosquitoes to breed by either draining or getting rid of items that hold water. Check rain gutters and drains. Empty any unused flowerpots and wading pools, and change water in birdbaths frequently.
- **Install or Repair Screens** – Some mosquitoes like to come indoors. Keep them outside by having tightly-fitting screens on all of your windows and doors.

Because the WNV causes death in certain kinds of birds, especially crows and blue jays, reporting dead birds has proven to be a good way to detect WNV activity in an area. If you would like to report a DEAD BIRD in your area, call 1-866-627-7968 for the MDPH WNV hotline. While most dead birds will not be collected and tested for WNV, keeping

track of their locations plays an important role in directing further bird, mosquito and human surveillance activities. Area residents who are concerned about mosquito activity in their neighborhoods may also contact the Bristol County Mosquito Control Project at 1-508-823-5253 to request targeted spraying and to obtain more information about the local mosquito control program. For more information about mosquito-borne diseases found in Massachusetts, go to the following MDPH website: [www.mass.gov/dph/wnv/wnv1.htm](http://www.mass.gov/dph/wnv/wnv1.htm).

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